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United Nations

Committee on Information

Report on the twenty-ninth session (30 April-11 May 2007)

General Assembly
Official Records
Sixty-second Session
Supplement No. 21 (A/62/21)

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Note

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Chapter I
Introduction

1. The Committee is composed of the following Member States:

Algeria
Angola
Argentina
Armenia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Bangladesh
Belarus
Belgium
Belize
Benin
Brazil
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cape Verde
Chile
China
Colombia
Congo
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Denmark
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Gabon
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Guyana
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Lebanon
Liberia
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Malta
Mexico
Moldova
Monaco
Mongolia
Morocco
Mozambique
Nepal
Netherlands
Niger
Nigeria
Pakistan
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Korea
Qatar
Romania
Russian Federation
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Singapore
Slovakia
Solomon Islands
Somalia
South Africa
Spain

Sri Lanka
Sudan
Suriname
Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic
Thailand
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Uruguay
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Viet Nam
Yemen
Zimbabwe

Chapter II
Organizational questions

A. Opening of the session

2. The organizational meeting of the twenty-ninth session of the Committee on Information was held on 30 April 2007 at United Nations Headquarters. The session was opened by the outgoing Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Mihnea Ioan Motoc (Romania).

B. Election of officers

3. The officers of the Committee on Information for the period from 2007 to 2008 are as follows:

Chairman:
Rudolf Christen (Switzerland)

Vice-Chairpersons:
Estevão Umba Alberto (Angola)
Marcelo Suárez Salvia (Argentina)
Marc Emillian Morar (Romania)

Rapporteur:
Hossein Maleki (Islamic Republic of Iran)

C. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

4. At its organizational meeting, the Committee adopted the following agenda and programme of work (A/AC.198/2007/1):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
4. Statement by the Chairman.
5. Admission of new members.
6. Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information.
7. General debate.
8. Consideration of reports submitted by the Secretary-General.
9. Open-ended working group of the Committee on Information.
10. Consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session.

5. The Committee held its general debate from 30 April to 2 May 2007. On 30 April, in the afternoon, the Department, led by its Under-Secretary-General, held an interactive dialogue with Member States.

6. For its consideration of agenda item 8, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the network of United Nations information centres: activities and strategic directions (A/AC.198/2007/2 and Corr.1);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations website: progress towards parity among official languages, accessibility and content management (A/AC.198/2007/3);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/2007/4 and Corr.1).

D. Observers

7. The following Member States took part in the session as observers: Comoros and Uganda. The Holy See and Palestine also participated in the session as observers.

8. Representatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also participated in the session as observers.

Chapter III
General debate

9. Statements in the general debate were made by the following States members of the Committee on Information: Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cape Verde, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Dominican Republic (on behalf of the Rio Group), Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Germany (on behalf of the European Union), Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China), Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America and Yemen. Statements were also made by the Comoros and Palestine, both of which attended the session as observers.

10. The general debate was preceded by statements by the Chairman of the Committee and the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information of the Department of Public Information.

11. In taking up the substantive questions before the Committee, speakers emphasized the central role of the United Nations in global affairs and of the Department of Public Information as its public voice. Underlining the important role played by the Department, one speaker, representing a large group, commended the Department for projecting a positive public image of the Organization. He said that the Department's most "daunting task" was to reach out to the widest possible audience, since the United Nations was a forum where the entire world's concerns were being debated. Because of the media's tendency to sensationalize bad news, it was critical to continuously project the United Nations ideals and accomplishments, intensify outreach and transmit its message to peoples in all Member States. The speaker said that his group appreciated the efforts of the Department, thus far, in promoting issues such as United Nations reform, climate change, immigration and development, World Information Society Day and the training of journalists. The Department had also done well in promoting new partnerships for Africa's development, genocide prevention, the Alliance of Civilizations, violence against children, the Millennium Development Goals, peacekeeping operations, counter-terrorism and the launching of the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-Wide Coherence. However, he hoped for a balanced communications campaign on reform that fully reflected the positions and perspective of Member States and those of senior United Nations officials.

12. Several speakers emphasized the vital role of the Committee on Information. One speaker said that the Committee had been established as a forum to, inter alia, examine the United Nations public information policies and activities and to promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communications order. He said that the Committee was mandated to make recommendations to bring about harmony, goodwill and greater understanding among peoples by building bridges among various societies, cultures and religions.

13. A speaker representing a large group commended the Department for its efforts in developing a more strategic approach to promoting global awareness and greater understanding of the work of the United Nations in priority areas. She welcomed the

new communications strategy, which was built on a closer relationship between the Department and its network of information centres and the other departments and offices, as well as the global network of more than 1,500 civil society organizations. "Client orientation" was the right term to describe the strategy needed to achieve the Department's mission, namely to fulfil the substantive purposes of the United Nations by strategically communicating the activities and concerns of the Organization to achieve the greatest public impact.

14. Another speaker, also speaking on behalf of a large group, acknowledged the Department's work in promoting the message of the Organization in areas such as peace and security; respect for human rights; fighting crime and illicit weapons trafficking; terrorism; and disease. The revitalization and reform of the General Assembly had been an important part of the agenda and the Department had a major role to play in disseminating public appreciation of the General Assembly, which was the most representative and deeply deliberative body of the Organization, he said.

15. Speaking on behalf of a large group, another speaker welcomed the more strategic approach being taken by the Department in executing its mandate, as well as its increased coordination with other areas in the United Nations. Its efforts to improve outreach had also begun bearing fruit, judging by feedback from educators and students. He noted that the Department's efforts to engage the public on issues relating to the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and the question of Palestine. The Department had also successfully turned the global spotlight on United Nations peacekeeping work, which was an important area of the Organization's operations, and commended it for the role it had played in commemorating the two hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade, he said.

16. A number of speakers identified the Department as the voice of the Organization and stressed that its voice should be heard in a clear and effective manner. One speaker, describing the role of the Department as indispensable, noted that if the United Nations was regarded as a house, the Department was its window. It was through this window that the general public got to know the United Nations. One speaker expressed appreciation for the Department's past activities, especially in promoting issues of importance to the international community, including sustainable development, decolonization, dialogue among civilizations and culture of peace and tolerance, rights of women and children and HIV/AIDS. He encouraged the Department to vigorously pursue its work in those areas.

17. Another speaker noted that, in order to strengthen international support for the Organization's activities, the Department should provide all people with accurate, comprehensive, timely and relevant information on the tasks and responsibilities of the United Nations in an impartial and transparent manner. At the same time, the Department should maintain and improve its activities in the areas of special interest to developing countries. Another speaker argued that the developing world should be given special treatment within the United Nations information system, and that the system should play a more effective role in disseminating balanced information. A third speaker said that his country believed the Committee on Information should direct special attention to the establishment of "new and just international information", as a priority. Information was being used by some countries to interfere in the internal affairs of others, in addition to being used as a form of

socio-political subversion. Another speaker was of the belief that the United Nations should lead an international effort aiming at creating a new world information order, based on free circulation and better balanced dissemination of information in order to assist developing countries to counter misleading propaganda, distorted facts and falsified news created against them by the Western media.

18. Referring to the four themes, peace and security, climate change, the Millennium Development Goals and human rights, identified by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information as main areas of future activities of the Department, one speaker said that due attention should also be given to issues such as the Palestinian question, migration and its causes, Africa's development and the dialogue among civilizations. Another speaker believed that the source of much of the violence and hostility prevailing in today's world was from prejudice born out of misunderstanding, miscommunication or lack of communication. He said that promoting dialogue among civilizations as an appropriate step could contribute considerably to better understanding and the fostering of friendship among nations. He hoped that the Secretary-General would spare no effort to promote and strengthen this important internationally consensus-based idea on a continuous basis.

19. Several speakers welcomed the newly appointed Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information and extended their continuing support to him. One speaker welcoming the efforts made, thus far, by the new head of the Department to meet with representatives of Member States to discuss the Department's role, encouraged him to take a fresh look at the Department's activities so that it focused on core activities and improved coordination, efficiency and integration throughout the United Nations system. He expressed the hope that the Department would consult with Member States when developing a strategic communications plan for the Organization since Member States were stakeholders in the Department, and a partnership must exist if the Department were to be strengthened. Many delegations also paid tribute to the former head of the Department, Shashi Tharoor, for his excellent leadership and performance as Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information.

20. Several speakers emphasized the importance of the freedom of expression and freedom of press. One speaker stressed that freedom of expression and freedom of information positively contributed to the economic, social and cultural development of all societies. However, if such freedoms did not go hand-in-hand with responsibility to respect the beliefs and rights of others, it might lead to incitement, anarchy and irrational behaviour, which, in turn, created resentment, hatred and hostility among the people of different faiths and cultures. In this regard, the speaker encouraged the Department to continue its efforts to promote respect for all cultures, religions and civilizations.

21. Several speakers stressed the importance of multilingualism in the work of the Department. One speaker, representing a large group, said that it was fully cognizant of the enormity of the task and the efforts being made by the Department to grapple with the goal of achieving parity among the official languages. Referring to the use of all the six official languages on the United Nations website, another speaker, also representing a large group, noted that reaching a global audience implied making full use of the linguistic diversity of the Organization. She commended the Department for its efforts to accelerate the pace of moving towards parity among

official languages on its website and to enhance the language capacity of the Website Section. She urged the Department to continue its concrete work in favour of multilingualism on the website, as well as in all of its activities. Another speaker underscored that more resources should be allocated for the purpose of ensuring parity on the website and the publications of all departments of the Organization, stressing that efforts should also continue in the modernization of information and communications technology. Another speaker considered multilingualism an important factor in the outreach activities of the United Nations. He said, however, that in promoting multilingualism, it was necessary to fully take into account the size of audiences and their real needs in a cost-efficient manner.

22. Another speaker, voicing support for the Department's efforts to upgrade its technology to disseminate information and other services, stressed that it was important to ensure that its messages also reached those without access to the new forms of technology, in particular countries in Africa as well as other developing countries. One speaker, representing a large group, reminded the Committee that a "digital divide" still existed between rich and poor countries. The Internet, despite its increased use in developing countries, could not be relied upon for effective transmission of messages in the developing world. There was a need, therefore, to continue to rely on traditional means of communication, particularly radio, in reaching populations in far flung and remote areas of the world. Another speaker, also representing a large group, reiterated the importance of the continued reliance on traditional means of communication, including radio and print, to disseminate key United Nations messages. He encouraged the Department to seek greater diversity with its regional, national and local media partners in order to spread the message of the United Nations to every corner of the world in a precise, impartial and effective manner. Another speaker argued that it would be imprudent to rely entirely on modern technology, when simple and affordable means could also be employed in a cost-effective manner. He asked the Department to ensure that international radio broadcasting remained an integral part of its activities. Referring to the Department's training programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries, he said that only 15 journalists benefited from training grants, a low number in the light of the great need for training in the developing world. He expressed hope that the Department would work to increase the number of recipients.

23. A number of speakers called upon the Department to promote the results of the World Summit on the Information Society. Urging the Department to step up its efforts to reduce the digital divide between the North and South, one speaker appealed to the Department to promote the positive results of the World Summit and to support implementation efforts with necessary financing. Another speaker said that it was also up to the Department to inform the international community about the Summit and its results, in particular the Tunis Agenda. Beyond the fact that the Summit had been a key event for the Organization, it had also laid the foundation for a new global communications and information order and had paved the way for narrowing the digital divide, she said. She also invited the Department to contribute actively to the annual observance of the World Information Society Day on 17 May.

24. Stressing the importance of accessibility to the United Nations website by persons with disabilities, one speaker representing a large group noted that the decision of the General Assembly to facilitate access to web pages for all persons

with disabilities had not been fully implemented by the Department and that achieving that goal must be a priority.

25. Advocating for an increase in the number of radio programmes in non-official languages, one speaker said that Kiswahili was the only African language being broadcast by United Nations Radio, but that it was given the least amount of air time, limited to a 30-minute, once-weekly news programme and a half-hour weekly feature. In contrast, other official and non-official languages had daily programmes. He believed that increasing the amount of air time for Kiswahili programming was vital for circulating important information on the ground. Another speaker expressed support for all forms of information coverage of United Nations activities in Russian. The rising number of page visits to the Russian section of the United Nations website showed the increased interest of Russian-speakers in the work of the Organization, which gave rise to the possibility, he said, of instituting webcasts of United Nations meetings in Russian. Another speaker, referring to United Nations Radio's programming in Bangla, regretted that the two weekly programmes had been reduced to one. He wondered about the criteria for producing radio programmes in non-official languages. Some had daily programmes and regular staff, with abundant information available from multiple sources, while others, with wider audiences, had only weekly programmes with no regular staff. Another speaker commended the work done by the Portuguese Radio Unit, in particular the increase in services produced and the audience and broadcasting partnership. Urging the Department to review the staffing shortage, she said the need to achieve an optimal balance between addressing the information needs of specific regions and ensuring cost-effectiveness was clear while cautioning that the pursuit of the latter aim should not, however, be at the expense of effective outreach to the public in specific regions.

26. Several speakers commented on the role of public information in promoting United Nations peacekeeping operations. One speaker, representing a large group, noted that peacekeepers often produced huge success stories and that it was important to tell their stories both globally and locally. He stressed that the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should work together towards that aim. He also welcomed the creation of a joint public information working group focused on increasing awareness of the United Nations peacekeeping efforts. Another speaker said that with the increased role of United Nations peacekeeping operations it was imperative for the Department to establish an effective communications and public information system to cope with unexpected communications crises and to gain public support for United Nations activities, both within specific regions and in the wider world. Another speaker pointed out that, as a troop-contributor, his country recognized the importance of information dissemination in United Nations peacekeeping and was pleased at the growing cooperation between the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Particularly welcome had been the daily meeting of the joint public information working group, which had been started in 2006. He fully believed that such initiatives would enhance the image of the United Nations in the eyes of the world and the quality of peacekeeping missions.

27. Many speakers drew attention to the role of the network of United Nations information centres and expressed support for their strengthening. Speaking on behalf of a large group, one speaker noted that the information centres were vital to the flow of information. He supported the call for adequate resources for their

effective functioning, but underlined that any decision pertaining to the reorganization of those centres should be made in close consultation with the host countries. Another speaker, also representing a large group, noted that the Department's reform efforts over the past five years had resulted in a more strategic approach to the work of the information centres. Her group had lent its support to the proposal of the Secretary-General for regional hubs in 2002, hoping for real medium- to long-term benefits to the United Nations and to the peoples of the world. That decision had forced several European countries to take the tough decision to close offices in their capitals. Underlining that those efforts were now bearing fruit, she encouraged other Member States and regional groups to consider taking similar decisions. She reiterated that the pursuit of the rationalization and improvement of the network of information centres could and should include in-depth evaluation and transparent budget planning. Calling for expanding the culture of evaluation to cover the performance of the information centres, she asked the Department, in cooperation with the Office of Internal Oversight Services, to thoroughly evaluate their work and to report to all Member States in a detailed manner.

28. One speaker, referring to the closure of nine information centres in Western Europe and the creation of the Regional Information Centre in Brussels, remarked that a number of countries often spoke of the Department's "regionalization" strategy, which had brought about the reorganization of the network of United Nations information centres. The same group of countries often talked of the Regional Centre in Brussels as a good model to follow and encouraged others to adopt that model. He argued that the subsequent flow of resources and the assignment of new responsibilities to various regional hubs did not constitute steps towards regionalization. He also noted that cultural, local and regional realities and access to information and communications technology were very different between developing and developed countries. There was, therefore, no "one size fits all" solution. Another speaker, arguing that the information centres were most useful to those communities where information technology was not readily available, or where one of the six official United Nations languages was not widely spoken, hoped that the rationalization of the information centres would be implemented in a way that enhanced the Organization's outreach to Member States currently outside the scope of the Department.

29. Another speaker, who said that his Government supported the Department's efforts to rationalize United Nations information centres, hoped that it would link the regionalization process for the centres with a system-wide evaluation of all United Nations offices worldwide. Furthermore, his Government would like to see the United Nations continue efforts to house all country offices in the United Nations system under one roof, with one central public information unit.

30. One speaker, urging the Department to open an information centre in Luanda, argued that such a centre would serve the special needs of five Portuguese-speaking developing countries in Africa. Those countries could not rely on the Regional Centre in Brussels, and their special needs could more effectively be addressed through a centre in Luanda. He also noted that the Government of Angola had offered "rent-free" premises for such a centre and emphasized that the decision to open the centre should not be dependent on the process of rationalization or regionalization of the information centres.

31. Several speakers commented on the Department's outreach programme. One speaker said the Department had done a commendable job through its outreach programmes, in particular in its efforts to reach target audiences using both traditional means of communication and current information and communications technology, such as the Internet and the United Nations website. The Department's recent strategic approach had achieved a good level of success in informing the public about the issues most important to the global community. In that context, he appreciated the work of the Communications Group, which was a platform for promoting the common agenda of the United Nations system. Another speaker praised the Department for the positive outcome of the second annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust while another remarked on the emphasis given to new and innovative programmes for civil society and education systems.

32. A number of speakers commented on the Department's information programme on the question of Palestine. One speaker congratulated the Department for its activities in that regard and encouraged it to continue to actively follow the situation, to offer its cooperation and support to Palestinian civil society organizations and to marshal even more solidarity and support from the international community for the Palestinian people, with the overall goal of promoting the exercise of their inalienable rights and the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine. Another speaker noted that the United Nations visitors' tours did not sufficiently address the question of Palestine and hoped that the Department would consider making the question of Palestine a bigger part of the tours. Another speaker, referring to the implementation of General Assembly resolutions on the Palestinian information programme, regretted that, by its very definition, the programme promoted a one-sided narrative. Especially at a time of United Nations reform and revitalization, the speaker felt that the programme should be substituted, in due course, with a more balanced and constructive joint effort concerning peace in the Middle East, aimed at the promotion of tolerance, peace education, mutual understanding and the prevention of incitement. Another speaker said that his country looked forward to a United Nations media message that could advance efforts to enhance dialogue and understanding among civilizations and narrow the gap between the countries of the North and South.

33. Several speakers commented on the Department's emphasis on a culture of evaluation. One speaker, representing a large group, said that successful communication rested on ever deeper knowledge of audiences and their expectations. Systematic impact reviews, conducted by the Department since 2002, were an important instrument to find out whether United Nations information met the demands of the users. She commended the Department for its effort to improve the targeting of its products, services and activities aimed at interested audiences, both in terms of relevance and quality, and she encouraged it to pursue and intensify its evaluation efforts and make it a common feature of its activities. Noting that the Department had successfully integrated a "culture of evaluation" to more effectively measure its activities, one speaker said that such measures would lead to greater vitality and efficiency and to a more strategic approach to its work.

34. At the concluding meeting of the general debate, the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information provided an in-depth response to a wide range of questions raised by delegations during the general debate.

35. Also at the concluding meeting, an observer, exercising his right of reply, noted the usefulness of the Department's Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine in raising awareness with regard to the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East. These issues were of high importance on the agenda of the United Nations, and indeed of the international community.

36. In a statement made at the open-ended working group, the Coordinator of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China mentioned that it had agreed to a proposal by the European Union to streamline the resolution of the Committee on Information. He assured the European Union that the Group of 77 and China, in its draft resolution in 2008, would propose language with a view to streamlining the resolution, which could be taken up for discussion at the thirtieth session of the Committee. The Coordinator also stated that the question of the name of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library was to be deferred to the next session and would be dealt with in the light of the legal and other relevant provisions that govern the changing of names.

Chapter IV

Preparation and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session

37. At its 6th plenary meeting, the Committee on Information proceeded to adopt its draft report, including two draft resolutions, by consensus. A text, submitted by the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, formed the basis of negotiations for a draft resolution, which involved two negotiating groups, the Group of 77 and China and the European Union, as well as other Member States.

Draft resolution A
Information in the service of humanity

The General Assembly,

Taking note of the comprehensive and important report of the Committee on Information,[1]

Also taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information,[2]

Urges all countries, organizations of the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned, reaffirming their commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information, as well as to those of the independence, pluralism and diversity of the media, deeply concerned by the disparities existing between developed and developing countries and the consequences of every kind arising from those disparities that affect the capability of the public, private or other media and individuals in developing countries to disseminate information and communicate their views and their cultural and ethical values through endogenous cultural production, as well as to ensure the diversity of sources and their free access to information, and recognizing the call in this context for what in the United Nations and at various international forums has been termed "a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process":

(a) To cooperate and interact with a view to reducing existing disparities in information flows at all levels by increasing assistance for the development of communication infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries, with due regard for their needs and the priorities attached to such areas by those countries, and in order to enable them and the public, private or other media in developing countries to develop their own information and communication policies freely and independently and increase the participation of media and individuals in the communication process, and to ensure a free flow of information at all levels;

(b) To ensure for journalists the free and effective performance of their professional tasks and condemn resolutely all attacks against them;

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/62/21).

[2] A/62/__.

(c) To provide support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes for broadcasters and journalists from public, private and other media in developing countries;

(d) To enhance regional efforts and cooperation among developing countries, as well as cooperation between developed and developing countries, to strengthen communication capacities and to improve the media infrastructure and communication technology in the developing countries, especially in the areas of training and dissemination of information;

(e) To aim at, in addition to bilateral cooperation, providing all possible support and assistance to the developing countries and their media, public, private or other, with due regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to action already adopted within the United Nations system, including:

(i) The development of the human and technical resources that are indispensable for the improvement of information and communication systems in developing countries and support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes, such as those already operating under both public and private auspices throughout the developing world;

(ii) The creation of conditions that will enable developing countries and their media, public, private or other, to have, by using their national and regional resources, the communication technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, especially for radio and television broadcasting;

(iii) Assistance in establishing and promoting telecommunication links at the subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries;

(iv) The facilitation, as appropriate, of access by the developing countries to advanced communication technology available on the open market;

(f) To provide full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,[3] which should support both public and private media.

Draft resolution B
United Nations public information policies and activities

The General Assembly,

Emphasizing the role of the Committee on Information as its main subsidiary body mandated to make recommendations to it relating to the work of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat,

Reaffirming its resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946, establishing the Department, which states in paragraph 2 of annex I that "the activities of the Department should be so organized and directed as to promote to the greatest

[3] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Twenty-first session, Belgrade, 23 September-28 October 1980*, vol. I, Resolutions, sect. III.4, resolution 4/21.

possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world",

Emphasizing that the contents of public information and communications should be placed at the heart of the strategic management of the United Nations and that a culture of communications and transparency should permeate all levels of the Organization, as a means of fully informing the peoples of the world of the aims and activities of the United Nations, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in order to create broad-based global support for the United Nations,

Stressing that the primary mission of the Department of Public Information is to provide, through its outreach activities, accurate, impartial, comprehensive, timely and relevant information to the public on the tasks and responsibilities of the United Nations in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization with the greatest transparency,

Recalling the comprehensive review of the work of the Department of Public Information, requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001, as well as the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change",[4] and Assembly resolutions 57/300 of 20 December 2002 and 60/109 B of 8 December 2005, which provided an opportunity to take due steps to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department and to maximize the use of its resources,

Expressing its concern that the gap in information and communication technologies between the developed and the developing countries has continued to widen and that vast segments of the population in developing countries are not benefiting from the present information and communication technologies and, in this regard, underlining the necessity of rectifying the imbalances in the present development of information and communication technologies in order to make it more just, equitable and effective,

Recognizing that developments in information and communication technologies open vast new opportunities for economic growth and social development and can play an important role in the eradication of poverty in developing countries, and, at the same time, emphasizing that the development of these technologies poses challenges and risks and could lead to the further widening of disparities between and within countries,

Recalling its resolution 59/309 of 22 June 2005 on multilingualism, and emphasizing the importance of making appropriate use of the official languages of the United Nations in the activities of the Department of Public Information, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the five other official languages,

Welcoming the Dominican Republic and Thailand to membership in the Committee on Information,

[4] A/57/387 and Corr.1.

I
Introduction

1. *Reaffirms* its resolution 13 (I), in which it established the Department of Public Information, and all other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly related to the activities of the Department, and requests the Secretary-General, in respect of the public information policies and activities of the United Nations, to continue to implement fully the recommendations contained in paragraph 2 of its resolution 48/44 B of 10 December 1993 and other mandates as established by the General Assembly;

2. *Also reaffirms* that the United Nations remains the indispensable foundation of a peaceful and just world and that its voice must be heard in a clear and effective manner, and emphasizes the essential role of the Department of Public Information in this context, the activities of which should be so organized and directed as to promote to the greatest possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world;

3. *Stresses* the importance of the clear and timely provision of information by the Secretariat to Member States, upon their request, within the framework of existing mandates and procedures;

4. *Reaffirms* the central role of the Committee on Information in United Nations public information policies and activities, including the prioritization of those activities, and decides that recommendations relating to the programme of the Department of Public Information shall originate, to the extent possible, in the Committee and shall be considered by the Committee;

5. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, following the priorities laid down by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/275 of 23 December 2004, and guided by the United Nations Millennium Declaration[5] to pay particular attention to such major issues as the eradication of poverty, conflict prevention, sustainable development, human rights, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and the needs of the African continent;

6. *Also requests* the Department of Public Information to pay particular attention to progress in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and the outcomes of the major related United Nations summits and conferences in carrying out its activities;

7. *Reaffirms* the need to enhance the technological infrastructure of the Department of Public Information on a continuous basis in order to widen its outreach and continue to improve the United Nations website;

8. *Recognizes* the important work carried out by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its collaboration with news agencies and broadcasting organizations in developing countries in disseminating information on priority issues, and encourages continued collaboration between the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the promotion of culture and in the fields of education and communication, bridging the existing gap between the developed and the developing countries;

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[5] See resolution 55/2.

II
General activities of the Department of Public Information

9. *Notes* the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information,[6] and requests the Secretary-General to continue reporting to the Committee on Information on the activities of the Department at successive sessions;

10. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, while acknowledging its commitment to a culture of evaluation, to continue to evaluate its products and activities with the objective of improving their effectiveness, including through interdepartmental consultations, and to continue to cooperate and coordinate with Member States and the Office of Internal Oversight Services;

11. *Reaffirms* that the Department of Public Information is the focal point for information policies of the United Nations and the primary news centre for information about the United Nations, its activities and those of the Secretary-General;

12. *Also reaffirms* the importance of more effective coordination between the Department of Public Information and the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure consistency in the messages of the Organization;

13. *Further reaffirms* that the Department of Public Information must prioritize its work programme while respecting existing mandates and in line with regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation,[7] to focus its message and better concentrate its efforts and to match its programmes with the needs of its target audiences, on the basis of improved feedback and evaluation mechanisms;

14. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to continue to publicize the work and decisions of the General Assembly, requests the Department to continue to enhance its working relationship with the Office of the President of the General Assembly, and requests the Secretary-General to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to exert all efforts to ensure that publications and other information services of the Secretariat, including the United Nations website and the United Nations News Service, contain comprehensive, objective and equitable information about the issues before the Organization and that they maintain editorial independence, impartiality, accuracy and full consistency with resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly;

16. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to ensure that United Nations publications are produced in a cost-effective manner and to continue to coordinate closely with all other entities, including all other departments of the Secretariat and funds and programmes of the United Nations system, in order to

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[6] A/AC.198/2007/4 and Corr.1.

[7] ST/SGB/2000/8.

avoid duplication, within their respective mandates, in the issuance of United Nations publications;

17. *Emphasizes* that the Department of Public Information should maintain and improve its activities in the areas of special interest to developing countries and, where appropriate, other countries with special needs, and that the activities of the Department should contribute to bridging the existing gap between the developing and the developed countries in the crucial field of public information and communications;

18. *Also emphasizes* that the Secretary-General should continue to strengthen the coordination between the Department of Public Information and all other entities, including all other departments of the Secretariat and funds and programmes of the United Nations system, in the context of the client-oriented approach of the Department, which should identify target audiences and develop information programmes and media strategies for priority issues, and emphasizes that public information capacities and activities in other departments should function under the guidance of the Department;

19. *Notes with appreciation* the continued efforts of the Department of Public Information in issuing daily press releases, and requests the Department to continue providing this service to both Member States and representatives of the media, while continuing its efforts to improve their production process and streamlining their format, structure and length, keeping in mind the views of Member States;

20. *Also notes with appreciation* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to work at the local level with other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to enhance the coordination of their communication activities, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session on progress achieved in this regard and on the activities of the United Nations Communications Group;

21. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to continue to examine its policies and activities regarding the durable preservation of its radio, television and photographic archives, to take action, within existing resources, to ensure that such archives are preserved and are accessible and to report to the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session;

Multilingualism and public information

22. *Emphasizes* the importance of making appropriate use of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department of Public Information, including in presentations to the Committee on Information, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the five other official languages;

23. *Also emphasizes* the importance of ensuring the full, equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department of Public Information, and, in this regard, reaffirms its request to the Secretary-General to ensure that the Department has appropriate staffing capacity in all the official languages of the United Nations to undertake all its activities;

24. *Stresses* the importance of fully implementing its resolution 52/214 of 22 December 1997, in section C of which it requested the Secretary-General to

ensure that the texts of all new public documents in all six official languages and information materials of the United Nations are made available daily through the United Nations website and are accessible to Member States without delay;

25. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Information to enhance multilingualism in its activities, and requests the Department to continue its endeavours in this regard;

26. *Reiterates* paragraph 4 of section C of its resolution 52/214, and requests the Secretary-General to continue towards completion of the task of uploading all important older United Nations documents on the United Nations website in all six official languages on a priority basis, so that these archives are also available to Member States through that medium;

27. *Reaffirms* that it is important that the Secretary-General include in future programme budget proposals for the Department of Public Information the importance of using all six official languages in its activities;

28. *Welcomes* the work done by the network of United Nations information centres in favour of the publication of United Nations information materials and the translation of important documents in languages other than the official languages of the United Nations, with a view to reaching the widest possible spectrum of audiences and extending the United Nations message to all the corners of the world in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization;

Bridging the digital divide

29. *Recalls* with satisfaction General Assembly resolution 60/252 of 27 March 2006, in which it endorsed the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society and proclaimed 17 May annual World Information Society Day, also recalls the adoption of the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action[8] at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003, and in this regard requests the Department of Public Information to contribute to the celebration of this event and to play a role in raising awareness of the possibilities that the use of the Internet and other information and communication technologies can bring to societies and economies, as well as of ways to bridge the digital divide;

30. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to contribute to raising the awareness of the international community of the importance of the implementation of the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society;

Network of United Nations information centres

31. *Emphasizes* the importance of the network of United Nations information centres in enhancing the public image of the United Nations and in disseminating messages on the United Nations to local populations, especially in developing countries;

[8] See A/C.2/59/3, annex.

32. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the further rationalization of the network of United Nations information centres,[9] and, in this regard, recognizes the constraints of further regionalization as described in paragraph 25 of the report;

33. *Stresses* the importance of rationalizing the network of United Nations information centres, and, in this regard, requests the Secretary-General to continue to make proposals in this direction, including through the redeployment of resources where necessary, and to report to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

34. *Reaffirms* that rationalization of United Nations information centres must be carried out on a case-by-case basis in consultation with all concerned Member States in which existing information centres are located, the countries served by those information centres and other interested countries in the region, taking into consideration the distinctive characteristics of each region;

35. *Recognizes* that the network of United Nations information centres, especially in developing countries, should continue to enhance its impact and activities, including through strategic communications support, and calls upon the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of this approach to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

36. *Stresses* the importance of taking into account the special needs and requirements of developing countries in the field of information and communications technology for the effective flow of information in those countries;

37. *Also stresses* that the Department of Public Information, through the network of United Nations information centres, should continue to promote public awareness of and mobilize support for the work of the United Nations at the local level, bearing in mind that information in local languages has the strongest impact on local populations;

38. *Further stresses* the importance of efforts to strengthen the outreach activities of the United Nations to those Member States remaining outside the network of United Nations information centres, and encourages the Secretary-General, within the context of rationalization, to extend the services of the network of United Nations information centres to those Member States;

39. *Stresses* that the Department of Public Information should continue to review the allocation of both staff and financial resources to the United Nations information centres in developing countries, emphasizing the needs of the least developed countries;

40. *Encourages* the network of United Nations information centres to continue to develop web pages in local languages, also encourages the Department of Public Information to provide resources and technical facilities, in particular to those information centres whose web pages are not yet operational, and further encourages host countries to respond to the needs of the information centres;

41. *Takes note* of the proposal by the Secretary-General to work closely with the Governments concerned to explore the possibility of identifying rent-free premises, while taking into account the economic condition of the host countries

[9] A/AC.198/2007/2 and Corr.1.

and bearing in mind that such support should not be a substitute for the full allocation of financial resources for the information centres in the context of the programme budget of the United Nations;

42. *Also takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General containing the discussion regarding the creation of a United Nations information centre in Luanda[10] to address the special needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries, welcomes the offer made by the Government of Angola to host the centre as part of the network of United Nations information centres by providing rent-free premises, and encourages the Secretary-General, within the context of rationalization, to take all necessary measures to accommodate those needs;

III
Strategic communications services

43. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information,[6] and in this context reaffirms that the Department of Public Information is the principal department responsible for the implementation of information strategies, as mandated;

44. *Reaffirms* the role of the strategic communications services in devising and disseminating United Nations messages by developing communications strategies, in close collaboration with the substantive departments, United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, in full compliance with the legislative mandates;

Promotional campaigns

45. *Recognizes* that promotional campaigns aimed at supporting special sessions and international conferences of the United Nations are part of the core responsibility of the Department of Public Information, welcomes the efforts of the Department to examine creative ways in which it can organize and implement these campaigns in partnership with the substantive departments concerned, using the United Nations Millennium Declaration[5] as its guide, and requests the Department to pay particular attention to progress in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and the outcomes of the major related United Nations summits and conferences in carrying out its activities;

46. *Appreciates* the work of the Department of Public Information in promoting, through its campaigns, issues of importance to the international community, such as United Nations reform, the eradication of poverty, conflict prevention, sustainable development, disarmament, decolonization, human rights, including the rights of women and children and of persons with disabilities, strategic coordination in humanitarian relief, especially in natural disasters and other crises, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases, the needs of the African continent, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as dialogue among civilizations, the culture of peace and tolerance and the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, and requests the Department, in cooperation with the countries concerned and with the relevant organizations and

[10] A/AC.198/2005/3, para. 40.

bodies of the United Nations system, to continue to take appropriate measures to enhance world public awareness of these and other important global issues;

47. *Invites* the Department of Public Information to continue to work within the United Nations Communications Group to coordinate the preparation and implementation of communication strategies with the heads of information of the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session on the activities of the Group;

48. *Stresses* the need to continue the renewed emphasis in support of Africa's development, in particular by the Department of Public Information, in order to promote awareness in the international community of the nature of the critical economic and social situation in Africa and of the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;[11]

Role of the Department of Public Information in United Nations peacekeeping operations

49. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue to ensure the involvement of the Department of Public Information from the planning stage of future peacekeeping operations through interdepartmental consultations and coordination with other departments of the Secretariat, in particular with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations;

50. *Stresses* the importance of enhancing the public information capacity of the Department of Public Information in the field of peacekeeping operations and its role, in close cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in the selection process of public information staff for United Nations peacekeeping operations or missions, and in this regard invites the Department of Public Information to second public information staff who have the necessary skills to fulfil the tasks of the operations or missions, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution in accordance with Chapter XV, Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and to consider views expressed, particularly by host countries, when appropriate, in this regard;

51. *Emphasizes* the importance of the peacekeeping gateway on the United Nations website, and requests the Department of Public Information to continue its efforts in supporting the peacekeeping missions to further develop their websites;

52. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to continue their cooperation in raising awareness of the new realities, successes and challenges faced by peacekeeping operations, especially multidimensional and complex ones, and of the recent surge in United Nations peacekeeping activities, and welcomes efforts by the two Departments to develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy on current challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping;

53. *Also requests* the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to continue to cooperate in implementing an effective outreach programme to explain the policy of the Organization against sexual exploitation and abuse and to inform the public on the outcome of all such cases

[11] A/57/304, annex.

involving peacekeeping personnel, including cases where allegations are ultimately found to be legally unproven;

54. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions on the role of the Department of Public Information in United Nations peacekeeping operations;

Role of the Department of Public Information in strengthening dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace as means of enhancing understanding among nations

55. *Recalls* its resolutions[12] on dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace, and requests the Department of Public Information, while ensuring the pertinence and relevance of subjects for promotional campaigns under this issue, to continue to provide the necessary support for the dissemination of information pertaining to dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace, as well as the initiative on the Alliance of Civilizations and to take due steps in fostering the culture of dialogue among civilizations and promoting religious and cultural understanding via all mass media, such as the Internet, print, radio and television, and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report in this regard to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

IV
News services

56. *Stresses* that the central objective of the news services implemented by the Department of Public Information is the timely delivery of accurate, objective and balanced news and information emanating from the United Nations system in all four mass media, print, radio, television and the Internet, to the media and other audiences worldwide, with the overall emphasis on multilingualism, and reiterates its request to the Department to ensure that all news-breaking stories and news alerts are accurate, impartial and free of bias;

57. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include in his report to the thirtieth session of the Committee on Information proposals, along with their financial implications, to improve the scope of press releases in addition to the existing languages in order to widen the United Nations message, assuring their comprehensiveness and up-to-date nature, bearing in mind budgetary constraints;

58. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Department of Public Information continuing to draw the attention of world media to stories that do not obtain prominent coverage, through the initiative entitled "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About";

[12] Resolutions 53/22 and 55/23 on the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, 52/15, by which it proclaimed 2000 the International Year for the Culture of Peace, 53/25, by which it proclaimed the period 2001-2010 the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 56/6 on the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations and 59/142 on the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation.

Traditional means of communication

59. *Stresses* that radio remains one of the most cost-effective and far-reaching traditional media available to the Department of Public Information and an important instrument in United Nations activities, including development and peacekeeping, with a view to achieving a broad client base around the world;

60. *Notes* that the international radio broadcasting capacity for the United Nations is an integral part of the activities of the Department of Public Information, and requests the Secretary-General to make every effort to ensure its success and to report on its activities to the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session;

61. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to make every effort to achieve parity in the six official languages in United Nations radio production;

62. *Notes* the efforts being made by the Department of Public Information to disseminate programmes directly to broadcasting stations all over the world in the six official languages, with the addition of Portuguese, as well as in other languages where possible;

63. *Welcomes* the efforts being made by the Department of Public Information to produce and disseminate television news video and feature material to broadcasters around the world through satellite distribution and web delivery;

64. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to continue building partnerships with local, national and regional broadcasters to extend the United Nations message to all the corners of the world in an accurate and impartial way, and requests the Radio and Television Service of the Department to continue to take full advantage of the technological infrastructure made available in recent years;

United Nations website

65. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations website is an essential tool for the media, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, Member States and the general public, and, in this regard, reiterates the continued need for efforts by the Department of Public Information to maintain and improve it;

66. *Recognizes* the efforts made by the Department of Public Information to implement the basic accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities to the United Nations website, calls upon the Department to continue to work towards compliance with all levels of accessibility requirements on all pages of the website with the aim of ensuring its accessibility by persons with different kinds of disabilities, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session on progress made in this regard;

67. *Reaffirms* the need to achieve full parity among the six official languages on United Nations websites while noting with satisfaction that progress is being made to narrow the gap among different official languages on United Nations websites;

68. *Takes note* of the fact that the multilingual development and enrichment of the United Nations website has improved, and, in this regard, requests the Department of Public Information, in coordination with content-providing offices, to further improve the actions taken to achieve parity among the six official languages on the United Nations website;

69. *Welcomes* the cooperative arrangements undertaken by the Department of Public Information with academic institutions to increase the number of web pages available in some official languages, and requests the Secretary-General to explore additional cost-neutral ways to further extend these cooperative arrangements to include all the official languages of the United Nations;

70. *Reaffirms* its request to the Secretary-General to ensure, while maintaining an up-to-date and accurate website, the adequate distribution of financial and human resources within the Department of Public Information allocated to the United Nations website among all official languages, taking into consideration the specificity of each official language on a continuous basis;

71. *Recalls* paragraph 74 of its resolution 60/109 B of 8 December 2005, and in this regard reiterates that all content-providing offices in the Secretariat should continue their efforts to translate into all official languages all English language materials and databases posted on the United Nations website and to make them available on the respective language websites in the most practical, efficient and cost-effective manner;

72. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take full advantage of recent developments in information technology in order to improve, in a cost-effective manner, the expeditious dissemination of information on the United Nations, in accordance with the priorities established by the General Assembly in its resolutions and taking into account the linguistic diversity of the Organization;

73. *Recognizes* that some official languages use non-Latin and bidirectional scripts and that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations are based on Latin script, which leads to difficulties in processing non-Latin and bidirectional scripts, and requests the Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Information Technology Services Division of the Department of Management, to continue its efforts to ensure that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations fully support Latin, non-Latin and bidirectional scripts in order to enhance the equality of all official languages on the United Nations website;

74. *Notes with satisfaction* that United Nations webcast services provide live video of United Nations meetings and events, which is also available in the original language in which it is delivered;

75. *Welcomes* the electronic mail-based United Nations News Service, distributed worldwide in the English and French languages through e-mail by the Department of Public Information, and requests the Department as a matter of priority to continue to examine ways to provide this service in all official languages;

76. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to work within the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and other appropriate inter-agency bodies to establish a United Nations gateway, an inter-agency search facility in which all entities of the United Nations system should be encouraged to participate, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions on the activities of the High-level Committee on Management in this regard;

V
Library services

77. *Welcomes* the progress made in implementing the programmes outlined in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Modernization and integrated management of United Nations libraries: update on new strategic directions";[13]

78. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to continue to lead the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries, and requests the member libraries of the Steering Committee to continue to coordinate closely in the implementation of its programme of work;

79. *Takes note* of the steps taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the other member libraries of the Steering Committee to align their activities, services and outputs more closely with the goals, objectives and operational priorities of the Organization;

80. *Reiterates* the need to maintain a multilingual collection of books, periodicals and other materials in hard copy, accessible to Member States, including publications on peace and security and development-related issues, ensuring that the Library continues to be a broadly accessible resource for information about the United Nations and its activities;

81. *Recognizes* the importance of the depository libraries in disseminating information and knowledge about United Nations activities, and, in this connection, urges the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, in its capacity as the focal point, to continue to take the initiatives necessary to strengthen such libraries by providing regional training and other assistance and by improving their role with the aim of strengthening their support to users in developing countries;

82. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session on the activities of the Steering Committee and the work of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, including on the application of measures to enhance the effectiveness of the libraries within existing legislative mandates;

83. *Acknowledges* the role of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, as part of the Outreach Division of the Department of Public Information, in enhancing knowledge-sharing and networking activities to ensure access to the vast store of United Nations knowledge by delegates, permanent missions of Member States, the Secretariat, researchers and depository libraries worldwide, and takes note of the proposal to rename the library the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and Knowledge-Sharing Centre (DHLink), reflecting its new direction;

84. *Notes* the new approaches taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, in particular the Personal Knowledge Management initiative, to assist representatives of Member States and Secretariat staff in the use of information products and tools as a complement to the traditional training programmes;

85. *Recalls* paragraph 44 of its resolution 56/64 B of 24 December 2001, in which it welcomed the role of the Department of Public Information in fostering increased collaboration among libraries of the United Nations system;

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[13] A/AC.198/2006/2.

86. *Encourages* the Secretariat to develop and implement cost-neutral measures to provide Member States with secure access to the information currently accessible only on the Intranet of the Secretariat (iSeek), taking note that Member States have access to iSeek through the facilities of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library;

VI
Outreach services

87. *Acknowledges* that the outreach services provided by the Department of Public Information continue to work towards promoting awareness of the role and work of the United Nations on priority issues;

88. *Welcomes* the educational outreach activities of the Department to reach educators and young people worldwide via a range of multimedia platforms;

89. *Notes* the importance of the continued implementation by the Department of Public Information of the ongoing programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as mandated by the General Assembly, and requests the Department to consider how best to maximize the benefits derived from the programme by reviewing, inter alia, its duration and the number of its participants;

90. *Welcomes* the movement towards educational outreach and the orientation of the *UN Chronicle*, both print and online editions, and, to this end, encourages the *UN Chronicle* to continue to develop co-publishing partnerships, collaborative educational activities and events, including the "Unlearning Intolerance" seminar series, with civil society organizations and institutions of higher learning;

91. *Reaffirms* the important role that guided tours play as a means of reaching out to the general public, including children and students at all levels;

92. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by the Department of Public Information in organizing exhibitions on important United Nations-related issues within existing mandates at United Nations Headquarters and at other United Nations offices as a useful tool for reaching out to the general public;

93. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to strengthen its role as a focal point for two-way interaction with civil society relating to the priorities and concerns of the Organization;

94. *Commends* the United Nations Correspondents Association for its ongoing activities and for its Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Scholarship Fund, which sponsors journalists from developing countries to come to the United Nations Headquarters and report on the activities during the General Assembly, and urges donors to extend financial support to the Fund so that it may increase the number of such scholarships to journalists in this context;

95. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts and contribution of United Nations Messengers of Peace, Goodwill Ambassadors and other advocates to promote the work of the United Nations and to enhance international public awareness of its priorities and concerns, and calls upon the Department of Public Information to continue to involve them in its communications and media strategies and outreach activities;

96. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its next session on the activities being carried out by the Department of Public Information to enhance the public image of the Organization, especially where there is a component of the network of United Nations information centres;

VII
Final remarks

97. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that all reports requested by the Committee on Information are submitted and issued in accordance with the legislative mandate;

98. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session and to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the present resolution;

99. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to make every effort to ensure that the level of services provided by the Department of Public Information be maintained throughout the period of the implementation of the capital master plan;

100. *Requests* the Committee on Information to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session;

101. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session the item entitled "Questions relating to information".

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